

## **Helmut Kohl, Elections and Self-Assessment**

All Germans without exception acknowledge that Helmut Kohl was the best. He remained in office as Prime Minister for 16 years, for four consecutive terms.

During his tenure, several positive leaps took place in various economic, social and political aspects in the country. He was the architect of German Unity and his prudence succeeded in finalizing what was known as the policy of accord with East and West.

He also succeeded in officially liberating Germany from the occupation of four armies which split Berlin in two and separated the Western entity from the east. Travel to Western Berlin by land or air necessitated acquiring a permit from Eastern Germany.

The departure of the occupying armies enabled united Germany to become a fully sovereign state that has the right to participate in the UN.

Therefore, the page of the bitter World War II, with its negative implications that cast a shadow over the mind and soul of each German citizen for over 50 years was turned.

Helmut Kohl is also credited with priming and providing the so-called basic foundation for the European unity. This includes the standardization and adjustment of financial, monetary and legislative systems, the jobs and customs laws and parliamentary legislations as well as realignment of the standard specifications for all commodities.

In the era of Helmut Kohl, the fruit of his enormous effort was the creation of the European unity.

Even so, this man failed to obtain a fifth term in office and was disappointed by the electoral results, he asked, "Why did I lose the elections?" He answered with eyes downcast, "I was preoccupied with my own working success and the victories I have achieved at the national and regional level and I failed to pay enough attention to reaching out to the masses.

I thought that the statement of my account regarding my accomplishments would tilt the electoral results in my favor and there would be no requirement for me to exert the necessary effort to communicate with the masses".

Thus, Kohl uttered a truth that might be absent from the minds of some of us which is that a man's staying on for consecutive terms is not guaranteed even when considering the amount of success he has achieved.

Nonetheless, this should not divert everybody's attention from the necessity of establishing a plan that faces the challenges of each stage of his term in office. Man should reserve the planning means that transforms the plan of action from ink to paper into actual implementation. He must take into account that this contains the declaration of the presidential candidate regarding his plans in the form of promises whose results are measurable and announced to his electors and opponents.

Accordingly, each president could proceed by revealing the statement of account of his achievements. This could be done before the expiry of his tenure to publicly and undisputedly declare with measurable criteria the extent of his success.

Here in Egypt, we are witnessing our electoral battle fought between ten rivals in an unprecedented atmosphere of democracy. Everybody is keen to follow the rules applied by the free world countries which feature a possible model for implementation for third world countries.

What is attractive about the current Egyptian electoral experience is that it is consistent with the statement made by Helmut Kohl regarding the moment of self-assessment. We are certain that there is no past or future link with the thoughts of the former German Chancellor concerning his views regarding the issue of elections.

Worthy of recognition and appreciation was the approach followed by the National Democratic Party (NDP) candidate President Hosni Mubarak regarding his announcement of ambitious and appropriate plans. These contain integrated content that constitutes the platform for his party through which he contests the elections with the nine other contenders face to face. This was considered unusual by some of his rivals.

Only one hour after the NDP's platform was announced in al-Azhar Park, a candidate from Upper Egypt appeared on television and commented. He described the platform as a sham and asked, "Why did President Mubarak fail to implement this (platform) and his brilliant ambitions during his past terms of office."

Therefore, this candidate like many others proved he does not differentiate between a future plan of action to which its owner is committed or the achievements in the form of a statement of account for the past period.

This matter is almost the same as someone asking why the Mercedes did not produce its 2005 exquisite model during the 1940s instead of waiting until the year 2005.

In this context, some people may disregard that the dazzling 2005 model is nothing but a developed offshoot that is the product of ideas, mechanisms and innovations built on the previous model of the year 2004.

What we are now experiencing is the ability to create success and the essential requirement of developing that success to achieve more.

This confirms the fact that each stage of national work was characterized and associated with independent and continuous development plans. These prepared for challenges and coped with new developments until they were able to measure the achievements with their appropriate criteria.